



Delaware Board of Nursing
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Office of the Executive Director

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POSITION STATEMENT: CONSERVATIVE SHARP WOUND DEBRIDEMENT

The Delaware Board of Nursing defines conservative sharp wound debridement as the removal of loose avascular tissue without pain or bleeding and does not require the administration of general anesthesia. The Board deems conservative sharp wound debridement to be within the practice scope of the Registered Nurse. It is intended that this procedure be done only for the following indication after fulfillment of all prerequisites, and under the stated conditions:

Indication:

- Presence of loose necrotic tissue in a dermal ulcer. The etiology of the ulcer includes, but is not limited to, pressure, neuropathy, arterial and venous insufficiency.

Contraindications:

- Densely adherent necrotic tissue in which the interface between viable and nonviable tissue cannot be clearly identified.
- The patient who is at an increased risk of bleeding, such as the individual with an impaired clotting mechanism.
- The non-infected ischemic ulcer that is covered with dry eschar. In this setting, tissue oxygenation is insufficient to support infection control and wound healing, therefore placing the patient at risk for a serious infectious complication. Examples include, but are not limited to, arterial ulcers or diabetic ulcers with dry gangrene.

Prerequisites:

- Currently licensed as a registered nurse.

- At least 2,000 hours (1 year full-time) experience in wound care and completion of either an ET nursing education program or a Board approved wound care specialty course before or after required experience is attained or a baccalaureate degree and at least 4,000 (2 years full-time) experience in wound care.

Conditions:

- Policy and procedure is in place with the employing institution or contracting agency, which addresses educational preparation, certification, and a validation process for conservative wound debridement.
- Conducted with authorization from the client's primary health care provider.

Approved by the Delaware Board of Nursing 07/1995